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# FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20426

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 28, 2004  
Docket Nos. P-2778, P-2777,  
P-2061, P-1975 and P-2055

### **COMMISSION RELICENSES FIVE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS ON THE SNAKE RIVER IN IDAHO, BALANCES ENVIRONMENT AND POWER NEEDS**

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has granted new licenses to Idaho Power Company to continue operating five hydroelectric projects on the Snake River. Today's action provides for the protection of endangered species while allowing the company to continue generating electric power that is critical to the region.

The projects, which together have an installed capacity of 264.8 megawatts (MW), are part of the Northwest Power Pool area of the Western Electricity Coordinating Council region and are an important contributor of power to the region, the Commission determined. The Commission is required to give equal consideration to power development and protection of the environment.

To protect federally listed threatened and endangered snail species near the projects, the Commission told the licensee to perform studies of the effects of project operations on the species and submit a snail protection plan to the Commission for approval. The licenses also include protections for white sturgeon, which the State of Idaho classifies as a Species of Special Concern.

Among other things, the licenses provide for visual enhancements, the creation of wetlands, riparian and spring habitat protections, and increased recreational opportunities for the public.

Commission staff finished its environmental review of the project proposals in 2002. A settlement agreement resolving all issues associated with federally listed snail species at the projects was filed by Idaho Power in February 2004. The Commission included conditions in the licenses that were consistent with the agreement.

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The licenses, which are for 30 years, are for the following projects: Shoshone Falls (P-2778); Upper Salmon Falls (P-2777); Lower Salmon Falls (P-2061); Bliss (P-1975); and, C.J. Strike (P-2055). The projects are on the central portion of the Snake River Basin in south-central Idaho. The Snake River is the largest tributary of the Columbia River.

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